

an appropriate thing to do. I'm glad to hear the talk of abandoning tax cuts of the size that were being proposed. I tried to tell the American people in the campaign there was no way in the wide world that could be done, and I welcome that talk.

Democratic Congressional Support

Q. Does this 50-day point mark some sort of turning point for you in terms of shoring up, taking a firm stand on things, trying to present the Democratic side as a unified side against the Republicans?

The President. Well, I think they've been doing a good job on that. There have been two or three issues here lately where the Democrats have really rallied: first, in the national security area, where they basically were responsible for not going back to Star Wars, which would have been a big mistake and, secondly, where they voted against abandoning our commitment to the American people to put 100,000 more police officers on the street. And I believe they will be even more unified against an attempt to destroy the School Lunch Program. So I feel good about that.

But I also think we have been willing to work with the Republicans. You know, the bill to

apply to Congress the laws that applies to the private sector passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives with the same level of Democratic support as Republicans support. The bill to reduce the burden of unfunded mandates on State and local governments received large Democratic support.

So we want to work with the Republicans. But we have no intention of abandoning the American people to unproven theories and extreme positions. We're the people party, and we're going to stick up for the people. And when we can do that in good conscience by working with them to reduce the burden of Government, we want to do that, and we should do that. But I'm excited by the opportunity that this new period offers us to stand up for what we believe in.

Q. Where will you draw the line?

Deputy Press Secretary Ginny Terzano. Thank you.

The President. What did you say? Thank you? You want me to quit? [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Capitol.

Statement on the Peace Process in Northern Ireland
February 22, 1995

I welcome today's announcement by Irish Prime Minister Bruton and British Prime Minister Major of the launching of a joint framework document outlining their shared proposals for inclusive talks on the future of Northern Ireland. The publication of this document marks another significant step forward in the peace process. I congratulate both Prime Ministers, former Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds, Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring, and British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Sir Patrick Mayhew, all of whom have worked hard and risked much in the search for a new path forward to reconciliation and lasting peace.

The framework document lays the foundation for all-party talks among the British and Irish Governments and the political parties in North-

ern Ireland. The talks are intended to be all-inclusive, with all issues on the table. As the Irish and British Governments have emphasized, the document is designed to assist discussion and negotiation on Northern Ireland and will not be imposed on any party. The clear wish of the people of Northern Ireland is for a lasting peace. We call upon all the parties to examine the document carefully and move forward on the basis of it.

The guns and bombs have been silent in Northern Ireland for almost 6 months. The benefits of peace are obvious to all, and I urge the parties to seize this opportunity. I will continue to strongly support the peace process in Northern Ireland and to work with the Governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom to

build on today's courageous step forward toward lasting peace. In addition, I look forward to our Trade and Investment Conference to be held

this May as a way to underscore the tangible benefits to peace.

Statement on Compensation for Persian Gulf Conflict Veterans

February 22, 1995

Today, the country takes a long-overdue step to recognize the sacrifices of these Persian Gulf veterans. We are taking an unprecedented approach to assisting these veterans by providing compensation for conditions that have defied conventional diagnoses. We encourage any Persian Gulf veteran who is sick to file a claim, and we will automatically reopen previously denied claims as a result of this new law.

I felt that we could not wait on science. For some Persian Gulf veterans like Michael Sills, medical science does not have answers today, but we must not and will not give up.

Michael Sills and veterans like him who served their country honorably have earned our gratitude. And when they are sick, we must do what is right.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing that the President met with Michael I. Sills, one of the first recipients of a compensation check awarded to Persian Gulf conflict veterans with chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses.

Message to the Congress Reporting Budget Rescissions and Deferrals

February 22, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report one revised deferral, totaling \$7.3 million, and two revised rescission proposals, totaling \$106.7 million.

The revised deferral affects the Department of Health and Human Services. The revised rescission proposals affect the Department of Edu-

cation and the Environmental Protection Agency.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 22, 1995.

NOTE: The report detailing the proposed rescissions and deferral was published in the *Federal Register* on March 7.

Remarks to the Business Council

February 22, 1995

Thank you very much. Ed, you did such a good job, I was thinking there wasn't much more for me to say. I'll just—what if I say I agree and sit down and get a free meal? [*Laughter*] I'm delighted to be back here with this group, and I'm glad to see many old friends.

I've tried to make a couple of the tables, and afterward, I want to go around to say hello to everybody I missed.

I, more than anything else, want to say, too, I appreciate the receptivity that many, many members of this group have had to working